

Water—Your Liquid Asset

Water – it's the basis of life. And it's a nutrient we can't live without. Water is the most overlooked nutrient. What does water do to keep you healthy?

Water:

- Transports nutrients • Carries away waste
- Keeps our skin, nose, mouth and eyes moist

How Much Water Do You Need?

- Experts suggest that every day you should drink at least eight cups of fluid. The bulk of it should be water, but remember that low-fat milk, 100% juices, soups, and caffeine-free teas and coffee also contribute to the daily need; however, coffee and tea containing caffeine do not.

Here are some other tips on staying well hydrated:

- High heat and humidity put a great strain on the body's cooling system – be sure to drink plenty of water – perhaps more than eight glasses. It will help you stay cool.
- If you are exercising in the heat and humidity, remember to drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise.
- Water is the best thirst quencher. Most beverages billed as thirst quenchers are high in calories and low in essential nutrients.
- Children should also drink plenty of water every day and not rely on soft drinks and juices when they are thirsty.



More tips on staying well hydrated:

- Alcohol and caffeine increase fluid loss from the body and therefore increase the need for water.
- For a cool summer quencher, try mixing half sparkling water with half fruit juice. Your kids will love it too.

Here are some other Chillers!

- Blend chunks of frozen melon, peaches or berries with ice and a splash of fruit juice.
- Blend apples, apple juice, ice and add a pinch of cinnamon.

Here are some Warming Wonders!

- Add spices such as cinnamon, cloves and allspice to apple juice, cranapple juice, or decaffeinated tea and heat.
- Add orange peel and cinnamon to decaffeinated tea when brewing.

Soft Water vs. Hard Water

If you live in an area that has hard water, then your water supply is usually higher in calcium and magnesium – two important minerals that are essential nutrients and important to good health. Both minerals are needed to grow and maintain healthy bones and teeth.

Soft water is usually from deeper in the earth. But many families add water softeners to their water supply to get cleaner laundry or softer skin in the bath. Unfortunately, when water is commercially softened, sodium is added and calcium and magnesium are removed. This addition of sodium to our already sodium rich diets concerns many health experts. If you need to soften your water and have high blood pressure, consider drinking sodium-free bottled water.

What About Bottled Water?

- Bottled water isn't necessarily any healthier than tap water.
- Tap water can be a good source of flouride, which is important in preventing tooth decay. Most bottled water does not have flouride.
- Bottled water is a better "on the go" beverage choice than soft drinks.
- Bottled water is a convenient and easy way to make sure you drink enough water.